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ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

COMPT 85-289

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

DD/A Registr

VIA:

Executive Director

Deputy Director for Administration

General Counsel Comptroller

FROM:

Robert W. Magee

Director of Personnel

SUBJECT:

Pay Enhancement for Polygraph Officers



- 1. Action Requested: Paragraph 3 contains a recommendation that you approve a pay enhancement for polygraph officers performing polygraph examinations on a regular basis.
- 2. Background: The ability of the Agency to conduct necessary polygraph examinations is critical to the protection of intelligence sources and methods and the security of Agency operations. The lack of a sufficient number of qualified polygraph examiners has resulted in unacceptable delays in the security processing of Agency applicants, trial period employees, and industrial contractor employees, which retards the ability of the Agency to meet its essential personnel needs and requirements. For example, the delay in the security processing of Agency applicants frequently has been found to be the primary factor in applicant decisions to accept alternative employment.

Unfortunately, however, the Agency is experiencing considerable difficulty in attracting and retaining polygraph examiners. The polygraph examiner position in the Office of Security is marked by high turnover, with experienced examiners moving as soon as possible into other areas of that Office. The attrition for this position is not being offset by the numbers of new entrants into the occupation.

The reasons for these difficulties in recruitment and retention are inherent in the nature and requirements of the work. The major reason is the extraordinary level of stress entailed in the day-in, day-out performance of polygraph examinations in the Agency environment. The polygraph examiner is called upon recurrently to function in an emotionally charged atmosphere, often in unpleasant and adversarial circumstances. The polygraph examiner is frequently exposed to the less appealing aspects of human nature and tends to suffer adverse psychological effects. Moreover, due to these extraordinary psychological demands, only a limited number of persons are psychologically suited to conduct polygraph examinations on a sustained basis for a meaningful period of time.

A further impediment to adequate staffing of the polygraph examiner positions is the extensive training required to meet both professional and Agency standards. Even after preliminary training is completed, the examiner must undergo prolonged on-the-job training subject to intensive supervision and rigorous quality control criteria. As a result of the substantial training needed, the Agency must require a commitment from the individual to serve at least four years as a polygraph examiner.

Considering the importance of the polygraph function to the business of the Agency, the problems which we are facing in recruiting and retaining adequate numbers of polygraph personnel, and the impossibility of making polygraph examination work more appealing or attractive, the most practical approach to solving our problems in this area would be to provide a special pay incentive designed to attract new personnel and retain experienced personnel in this field. In addition to the obvious financial incentive to the individual to enter and remain in the high stress polygraph environment, the proposed pay enhancement would constitute recognition and appreciation by senior Agency management of the extreme demands placed on this dedicated and talented cadre.

3. Recommendation: That you approve for polygraph officers administering polygraph examinations on a regular basis a pay enhancement at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of base pay.

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